

HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 91

46TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2004

INTRODUCED BY

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A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE NEW MEXICO HEALTH POLICY COMMISSION TO CONDUCT A STUDY ON HEALTH CARE EXPENDITURES AND REFORM OPTIONS.

WHEREAS, "health care" encompasses more than coverage, access and delivery; it also includes primary and preventive care, nutrition and exercise; and

WHEREAS, the viability of the health care industry is as much a part of economic development as new and higher-paying jobs; and

WHEREAS, health insurance premiums have risen at a rate that outpaces general inflation; and

WHEREAS, rising health care costs affect all New Mexicans; and

WHEREAS, the lack of health insurance coverage for so many New Mexicans results in a social and economic burden for the

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1 affected families, employers, health care providers and the
2 state of New Mexico; and

3 WHEREAS, increasing numbers of businesses cannot afford to
4 provide health care coverage for their employees; and

5 WHEREAS, rising health care costs impact the cost of
6 workers' compensation, automobile and malpractice insurance
7 premiums; and

8 WHEREAS, as health care costs continue to increase, the
9 number of uninsured and uncompensated New Mexicans will
10 continue to rise; and

11 WHEREAS, losses from uncompensated care could be reduced
12 if insurance were provided to the uninsured; and

13 WHEREAS, the legislature is currently faced with the
14 dilemma of having to fund a variety of important health
15 programs, including medicaid, state employee, teacher and
16 retiree health benefits; public health initiatives; and
17 prescription drugs, at a time of rising costs and limited
18 general funds; and

19 WHEREAS, over the years, the legislature and the executive
20 have established numerous programs to address the issues of
21 health care cost, coverage and access; and

22 WHEREAS, despite these efforts, the problems of coverage,
23 access and cost continue to confront New Mexico; and

24 WHEREAS, the continuously increasing cost of health care
25 and the large numbers of uninsured New Mexicans necessitate the

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1 state considering a wide range of new approaches to addressing
2 these serious problems; and

3 WHEREAS, there are many options for reducing the number of
4 uninsured, from coverage through a single program to insurance-
5 market and employment-based reforms; and

6 WHEREAS, the challenge to policymakers is to select the
7 option or options that will reduce the number of uninsured and
8 control rising health care costs; and

9 WHEREAS, the New Mexico health policy commission is the
10 agency designated to collect and evaluate health data and make
11 policy recommendations;

12 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
13 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the legislative health and human
14 services committee, with the cooperation of the New Mexico
15 health policy commission, be requested to conduct a
16 comprehensive study to determine current and projected health
17 expenditures in New Mexico that will serve as a base line for
18 proposals for dealing with expenditures and reform options; and

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study look at several
20 alternative health care coverage models and analyze the impact
21 of these models on health care expenditures and the number of
22 uninsured; and

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial
24 be transmitted to the New Mexico health policy commission.

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